

REMARKS

Status

In response to the Office Action dated October 19, 2006 (the "Office Action"), Applicants submitted an Amendment on December 4, 2006. An Advisory Action regarding the Amendment was mailed on January 3, 2007. The Advisory Action indicated that the claims canceled by the Applicants were not placed within the listing of the claims with an appropriate status indicator. Applicants respond by including the canceled claims with the status indication of "canceled" in the listing of the claims presented above.

In anticipation of a notice of allowance being issued once the claim amendments presented above are entered, Applicants reviewed the figures and noted that FIG. 3 does not present the flow described in the specification at page 9, line 9 to page 10, line 7. A replacement sheet is submitted that comports with the specification. Applicants submit that no new matter is entered with the replacement drawing.

Applicants note with appreciation the previous indication that claims 9, 12-13, 15 and 17-18 would be allowed, if rewritten in independent form. Claims 9, 12 and 15 have been amended to conform to the Examiner's directions. Accordingly, claims 9, 12-13, 15 and 17-18 are pending in this application and reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

The Rejection of Claims 2-3 under 102(b)

In the Office Action, claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,641,156 to Hoisington et al. (hereinafter “Hoisington”). Claims 2-3 have been canceled. The rejection of claims 2-3 under 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,641,156 to Hoisington is now believed to be moot.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Rejection to claims 1 and 5-6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1 and 5-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of US Patent No. 5,392,065 to Suzuki (hereinafter “Suzuki”). Claims 1 and 5-6 have been canceled. The rejection of claims 1 and 5-6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Suzuki is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of US Patent No. 5,489,925 to Brooks et al (hereinafter “Brooks”). Claim 4 has been canceled. The rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C.

103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Brooks is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to Claims 7 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 7 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of US Patent No. 6,883,905 to Kimura et al (hereinafter "Kimura"). Claims 7 and 16 have been canceled. The rejection of claims 7 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Kimura is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to Claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Kimura and further in view of US Patent No. 6,056,394 to Rousseau et al (hereinafter "Rousseau"). Claim 8 has been canceled. The rejection of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Kimura and further in view of Rousseau is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to Claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Suzuki and further in view of Brooks. Claim 10 has been canceled. The rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Suzuki and further in view of Brooks is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Suzuki and further in view of Rousseau. Claim 11 has been canceled. The rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Suzuki and further in view of Rousseau is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to Claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Rousseau. Claim 14 has been canceled. The rejection of claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Rousseau is now believed to be moot.

Allowable Subject Matter.

The Applicants note with appreciation the allowability of claims 9, 12-13, 15 and 17-18 if rewritten in independent form. Claims 9, 12 and 15 have been amended and rewritten in independent form as suggested by the Examiner. Claim 13 is dependent on rewritten claim 12 and is therefore believed to be in allowable form. Claim 17 is dependent on rewritten claim 15 and is therefore believed to be in allowable form. Claim 18 is dependent on rewritten claim 15 and claim 17 and is therefore believed to be in allowable form.

Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, all pending claims have been amended and are patentable over all references of record. Reexamination and allowance of all pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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January 12, 2007
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